

# **STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

October 8, 2004  
Indiana Government Center South  
Indianapolis, IN

## ***APPROVED***

### **ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Craig Bell, Jody Cracee, Cynthia Diamond, Karol Farrell, Jim Hammond, Cathlene Hardy Hansen, Marcia Johnson, Becky Kirk, John Nally, Mary Ramos, Elaine Scaife, David Schmidt, Kristen Schunk, Cheryl Shearer, Julie Swaim, Jane Swiss, Steve Tilden

### **DOE STAFF PRESENT:**

Bob Marra, Paul Ash (representing Bob Marra second half of the meeting), Jennifer Campbell, Kim Payton

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Julie Armstrong, Wendy Nice, Marcus Robinson, Muriel Ryan, Shawn Sriver, Gerry Wagner

David Schmidt, the chair of the Advisory Council, called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. A quorum was established. The Council members reviewed draft minutes from May 2004. David Schmidt asked for comments. Craig Bell moved to approve the May minutes as written. Becky Kirk seconded the motion and the Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

Gerry Wagner, director of the Virtual Cooperative, led a presentation and discussion of the Virtual Special Education Cooperative's revised comprehensive plan for special education and related services. The plan has been revised to add new charter schools to the Virtual Cooperative. Gerry Wagner observed that the charter schools have had more challenges in serving students with disabilities than anticipated. Becky Kirk noted that there appears to be sparse related services in the Evansville area. Dr. Muriel Ryan and Gerry Wagner replied that it is often difficult to locate related services personnel and that an arrangement has been made with Indiana State University regarding psychological services for Southwestern Indiana. Jim Hammond asked if there were any interagency agreements for training purposes. Gerry Wagner replied that, at present, there were no interagency agreements. David Schmidt asked how the incidence rate for students with disabilities compares to that of the traditional public schools. Gerry Wagner replied that the incidence is probably less for the charter schools. David Schmidt then asked what will happen when the current Virtual Cooperative grows so large that a different arrangement becomes necessary. Gerry Wagner indicated that in the future the current Virtual Cooperative may need to separate into two units or some other arrangement to accommodate additional charter schools. David Schmidt observed that it would be helpful to have a statewide map of charter schools. Gerry Wagner replied that he would provide the Council with such maps.

David Schmidt asked if the Advisory Council wanted to approve the Virtual Special Education Cooperative's revised comprehensive plan for special education and related services. John Nally moved to approve the revised plan and Cynthia Diamond seconded the motion. The Advisory Council unanimously approved the plan.

Following the Charter School presentation, Julie Swaim began a discussion of students who are homeschooled. Julie Swaim asked if there were reports available that show the number of students homeschooled. John Nally reported that there are new state reports. Gerry Wagner observed that the student test numbers (STN) will make all student services and progress reporting more of a reality. Karol Farrell asked if families are responsible for reporting homeschooled students. Bob Marra replied that parents are responsible for reporting that they are homeschooling their children but enforcement is difficult, and the Division of Student Services of the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) could provide more specifics on this topic.

Karol Farrell asked if there was a new definition for students who drop out. John Nally indicated that a recent DOE document, likely from Educational Information Systems (EIS), was disseminated to collect additional student information. There was considerable discussion on this topic and Bob Marra indicated he would check into any possible definitional changes and determine exactly what documents may have been distributed by EIS.

Julie Swaim asked that the homeschool issue be put on hold and addressed at a later meeting.

Becky Kirk asked if handouts for the Advisory Council meetings could be sent to Council members well in advance of the meeting so she could have a chance to review. Bob Marra and David Schmidt replied that this is supposed to be the current practice, but they would redouble their efforts to assure time to review material before the meetings.

Bob Marra was called away from the meeting and Paul Ash continued in his place.

Shawn Sriver, Director of Licensing of the Indiana Professional Standards Board, presented on the new teacher licensure requirements (Rules 2002) and personnel shortages. Shawn Sriver described the process for developing Rules 2002 as being very public and very participatory. Representatives from interested groups and constituencies were invited to be part of the rule revision process. Mr. Sriver explained that the previous rules, Rule 46-47, were 20-30 years old and needed to be updated. The Professional Standards Board and various committees worked the past 6-7 years on developing Rules 2002. Rules 2002 were described as including 25 standards in content areas and there are developmental standards, which are essentially the grade levels for which the standards apply and for which teacher licenses are issued. Many of the standards were developed in Indiana though some were adopted from national standards.

Mr. Sriver discussed the personnel shortage in special education and noted that of approximately 1900 limited licenses issued annually in Indiana, approximately 80-85% are in some area of special education. Mr. Sriver also noted that the previous limited license is now referred to as an emergency license and that the emergency license has additional requirements, such as being accepted into a program by a university before

the emergency license can be issued. There was considerable discussion of Rules 2002 and of emergency licenses.

Jane Swiss expressed concern that the area of emotional disabilities is now in the mild disabilities category under Rules 2002. This is not, in the view of many, powerful enough to serve students with severe emotional handicaps who need highly trained teachers. Mr. Sriver noted that under Rules 2002 the licensing procedure is not “course hour driven,” that teacher-training institutions can customize their programs to the candidate and also consider life experiences the candidate may bring. The Council expressed appreciation to Mr. Sriver for his presentation and answers to questions, but concluded that there are many teacher training issues that need to be addressed.

The Council took a 45-minute lunch break.

Paul Ash led a discussion on the Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR), which is used to assess students with the most significant cognitive disabilities on alternate achievement standards as permitted under No Child Left Behind. Mr. Ash led the initial discussion with the handout entitled “Balancing IDEA and NCLB.” Four major points were emphasized in the presentation:

1. Criteria and proposed regulations
2. Alternate achievement standards
3. Use of “proficient” scores in calculating AYP
4. 1% cap

Mr. Ash also discussed that the 1% cap does not apply at the building level and “waivers” are possible at the corporation and state levels.

Following the ISTAR presentation, Mr. Ash presented a Division Update that included the Indiana’s State Incentive Grant (INSIG) and a report indicating that the INSIG staff have been hired, the participating school corporations have been selected, and the grant activities are underway.

Supplemental preschool funds were also addressed. The earlier preschool shortfall of approximately \$65 per early childhood student has been remedied. Mr. Marra was successful in his appeal to state budget officials to redirect funds to this shortfall area. The shortfall would have adversely impacted services to preschool students with disabilities served by the schools. Several Council members expressed their appreciation for the successful efforts of the Division in correcting this shortfall.

Finally, Mr. Ash reported on the status of the IDEA reauthorization. A handout from the National Association of State Boards of Education was distributed. This handout described that only a week remained for House leaders to appoint representatives to the House-Senate conference committee. It is uncertain whether action will be taken during the remainder of this session or whether the process will begin anew with the next session of Congress.

Results from the Advisory Council Member Survey were distributed and discussed. Several members want to discuss further the results of the survey at a future meeting. No action was taken.

Finally, the Council agreed to cancel the scheduled November meeting and to meet again as planned on February 11, 2005, and May 20, 2005.

Several members asked that future meetings be held at convenient locations such as Interstate accessible hotels. John Nally offered one of the Department of Correction facilities as a future meeting site. There was general agreement that this could provide a unique perspective and experience and should be considered.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.